

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY USSR (Eastern Siberia)

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SUBJECT City of Chita

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1. The city of Chita (52-03N, 113-30E), Chita Oblast, was built in approximately the 18th Century. The central part of the city was built in accordance with a plan, with parallel streets, but the outskirts grew up without a plan. The city has developed in an irregular manner. The central street is wide and covered with asphalt. The other streets are generally irregular, twisted, and crooked. Only the central street is illuminated with electricity. The other streets are not lighted at all. A few of the street markers are 15 x 35 cm., blue metal plates with white lettering. Most of the markers are white metal plates, 15 x 35 cm., with black lettering. On one side of a street the numbers are odd and on the other side they are even.
2. The homes are one story, with three or four rooms. Government buildings and hotels are two- or three-story. Houses are built of wood; government buildings are mud bricks and concrete. Wood, iron, sheet iron, and tile are used for roofing. Concrete buildings are painted white and yellow, mud brick buildings are painted red, and wooden buildings are painted white.
3. On Leninskaya Street, the central street, there are government departments, stores, the hospital, and the Dinamo football stadium. [redacted] the [redacted] other streets [redacted] are small. Principal landmarks in the city are the museum, the Memorial to A Deceased Partisan which stands in a square north of the Army Headquarters building, the Memorial to an Aviator Colonel (this colonel went down in a Boston aircraft), and a church in the northeast part of the city.
4. The population of approximately 120,000 consists mainly of Russians but contains a Buryat minority group. The five percent of the population which is interested in religious affairs follows the Orthodox faith.
5. There are two railway stations, named Chita I and Chita II. The Chitinka River runs through the city. Chita II station is in the center of town, on Leninskaya Street. Chita I station is on the opposite bank of the river and is 6 km from Chita II. Chita II station is a painted concrete building

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located on the railway line. [redacted] four or five tracks pass the station. The freight station is in the same building. Passengers can purchase railway tickets only if they show a health document issued by a doctor certifying that they are clean and healthy. A medical building is located near the station. Chita is connected by rail with Ulan Ude and Kuibyshevka Vostochnaya. Approximately two steam-driven passenger trains in each direction run through Chita daily [redacted]

6. There are two civilian airfields in the vicinity of Chita. The Kadala civil airfield is 18 km southwest of the city. The other civil airfield is 12 km north of the city. Chita military field is on the immediate northern edge of the city. Headquarters of the Soviet 12th Air Army is at this field. The civilian airline flies regular passenger flights between Moscow and Khabarovsk, between which there are many places where the planes land (Novosibirsk, Sverdlovsk, Yakutsk). [redacted] four passenger planes land at Chita and four take off per day. There are no hangars at the civil fields. On the military field there are four [redacted] there are no underground installations at these fields.

7. An automobile road runs between Chita I and Chita II airfields. The buses are generally blue and can carry 25 passengers. Automobiles are gray. The bus fare between Chita I and Chita II is one ruble, paid in cash. Soldiers in uniform are required to pay bus fares. Taxis cost four or five rubles per person.

8. [redacted] the population of Chita consists principally of industrial workers, although he thinks there are no large factories in town. Prices are fixed in Chita Oblast. There is a black market but the government fights the speculators; when a speculator is arrested, he is sent to a camp. In Chita Oblast there are no fruits such as apples, pears, grapes, etc. On the other hand, there are great quantities of potatoes and meat. Workers are free to look for employment. They work 8 hours per day. Medical care for workers is free. When a person is late for work, a workers' jury assesses 25% of his salary for six months for the first offense, 50% the second time, and the third time he is sent to a camp where he must work without pay.

9. No. 12 on the attached city plan indicates the location of the local Communist Party headquarters. Members of the Party in the regiment [redacted] met once in six months. Members of the Party in the company met once a month and those in the section twice a month. Members of the Party are required to pay three percent of their salary each month for Party dues; this amount is collected by Party members. Recent propaganda has emphasized increase in production and the fight against anti-Communist nations. All children reaching the age of 16 years receive an invitation to join the Komsomol. The Assembly of the Komsomol studies the applications. Komsomol members also are required to give three percent of their salaries as dues. There once was an anti-religious club in Chita but it no longer exists. A peasant organization exists [redacted]

10. The newspaper in Chita is the Buryat-Mongolska Pravda. There is published also a workers' newspaper called Zabaykalski Rabochi. All newspapers printed in Moscow are also available in Chita.

11. There is a radio station in Chita [redacted] it is called Chita I. Radio sets are not numerous. Because the price is high (550 to 2,200 rubles), the average person is not able to buy a radio. The people are able to hear Russian propaganda broadcasts through loudspeakers. Cables for these broadcasts run in front of the houses and attachments can be made. During the war, all radio receivers were collected by the government. After the war, permission was again granted to have receivers. Rarely, some individuals have private receivers. The purchase of radio equipment is permitted and no documents are required. There are people who listen to European stations. There is no law against and no control measures have been taken to prevent listening to foreign broadcasts,

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but the persons so doing are unfavorably regarded. For that reason, one listens to such broadcasts clandestinely.

12. A person coming to Chita would have difficulty in finding a room because there are not enough hotels. An acceptable reason for being in the city would be that a person was passing through Chita enroute to the neighboring towns, such as Malakovka (18 km NE) and Darasun (70 km NE). There are two hotels in town, shown on the map as No. 31. They charge 7 to 10 rubles per day.
13. In the local hospital, the residents of the city can receive medical attention. Doctor's examination and medicines are without charge. Only medicines obtained at pharmacies are paid for. There is a cemetery at Chita I [redacted] There is no crematory.

14. There are three cinemas, which are also used as dramatic theaters. One is called "Komsomlets," another "Zabaikalets." The "Komsomlets" is a children's theater where films are shown for two days. In the "Zabaikalets" there are two salons; at the same time, two different films are shown. There is only one salon in the third cinema. Soviet films only are shown as a rule. Several times American films have been shown but they were anti-American in tone. Only recently permission has been given to show these films. The voice is English and there are Russian subtitles. The most popular sport is football. The football field is shown as No. 4 on the attached plan and the park is No. 14.

15. The following troops are in Chita:

General Staff of 12th Air Army
 General Staff of a ground force army
 49th Regiment Air Reconnaissance
 Army Ambulance Corps
 2 companies of ground troops
 MVD troop

The 49th Regiment numbers 110 men. The commander of the ground force troops is Col. Gen. Karateyev. In Chita there are Dosav and Dosarm organizations. Formerly, individuals volunteered for these organizations, but now membership is obligatory.

16. Attached is a plan of the city of Chita. Following is the key to this plan:

1. Chita II railway station
2. Warehouse
3. Station ticket office (Note: Two are shown.)
4. Stadium
5. MVD
6. Directorate of Physical Training
7. 12th Air Force headquarters and army headquarters
8. City square
9. Memorial to Dead Partisans
10. Memorial to Soviet Colonel
11. Garrison command
12. Party building
13. City Markot (Note: Two are shown.)
14. City park
15. Civilian hospital
16. Military Club
17. Air force hospital (omitted on original sketch)
18. Medical building of the railway station
19. Luggage office
20. Casino
21. Stores
22. Church
23. Radio-location and anti-aircraft unit
24. Concrete bridge, three lanes wide
25. Chita military air field
26. Chita civil air field
27. Kadala Civil air field
28. Fields

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- 29. Large iron bridge
- 30. Houses
- 31. Hotel (two)
- 32. Cinema

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 **Comment:** Note that the directions given on the map do not agree exactly with those in the text. For example, the church is described in para. 3 as being in the northeast section of the city but is shown on the map in the eastern part. Again, the Chita military airfield is described as being on the north side of the town but is indicated on the map as being on the west side, and the Kadala airfield is described in the text as 18 km from town but indicated on the map as 21 km away.

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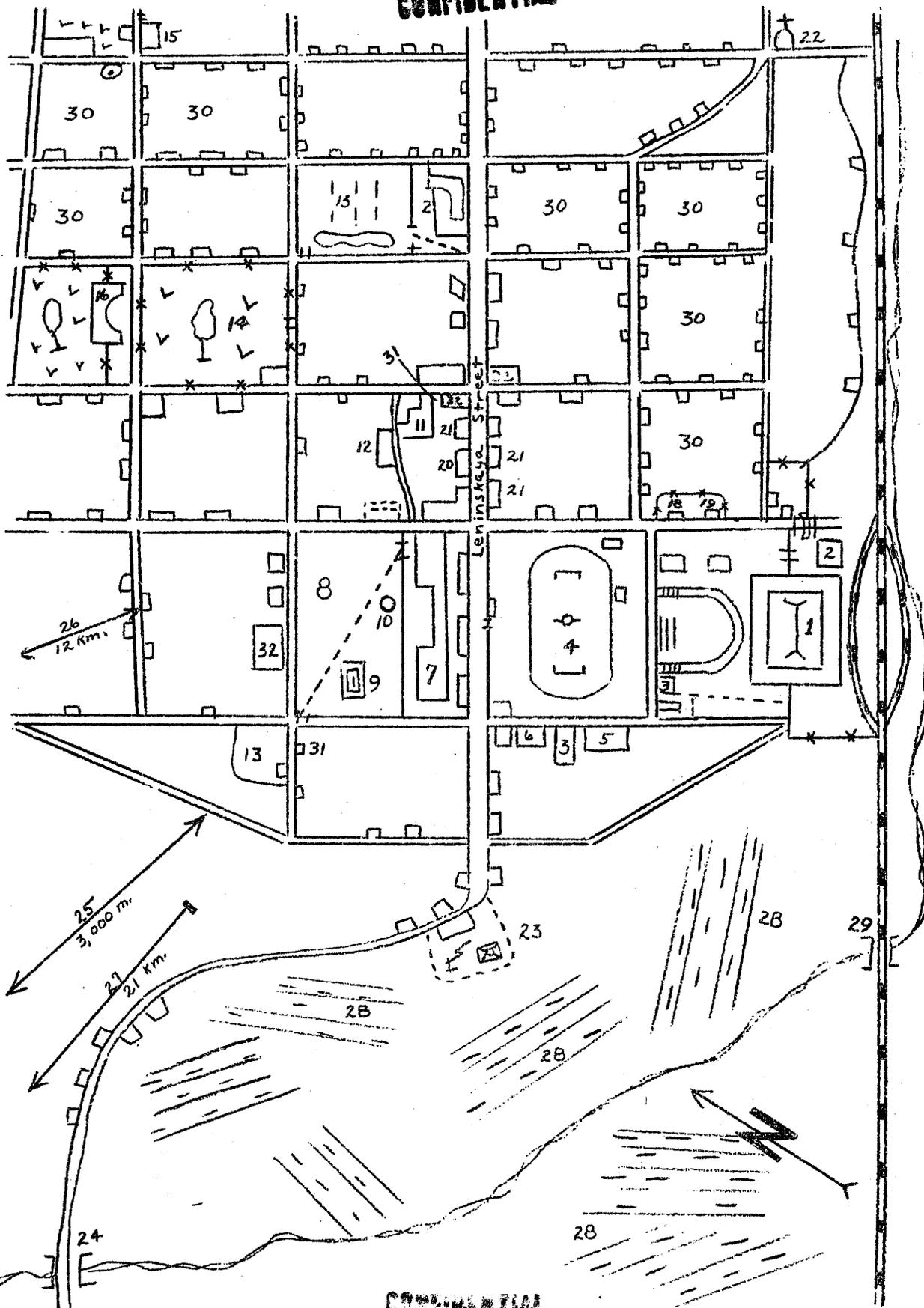
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Attachment

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TOWN PLAN OF CHITA